

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 01965 241612Z

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

IO-13 ACDA-10 OMB-01 /088 W

-----250422Z 079932 /63

R 241551Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2370

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

DIA WASHDC

SECDEF WASHDC

USCINCEUR

/USIA WASHDC 1459

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 1965

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY

SUBJECT: SYRIAN PRESS PUBLISHES BREZHNEV SPEECH WITHOUT COMMENT

EXCERPTS FROM BREZHNEV SPEECH WERE CARRIED ON FRONT PAGES
ALL PAPERS, BUT NO DIRECT RESPONSE OR REACTION TO HIS
OUTLINE OF ME SETTLEMENT HAS YET APPEARED IN SYRIAN MEDIA.
ARTICLE IN MARCH 22 AL-BAATH WAS CAPTIONED; "NEW SOVIET PROPOSALS
ON ME. BREZHNEV -- 'FULL WITHDRAWAL IN STAGES DURING
SEVERAL MONTHS. PALESTINIAN STATE, BUFFER ZONES, AND INTER-
NATIONAL GUARANTEES.'" ARTICLE CONFINED ITSELF TO STRAIGHT
TEXTUAL REPORTING OF SPEECH INCLUDING PASSAGES NOT TOTALLY
IN HARMONY WITH ARAB THINKING. NO "OBSERVERS" QUOTED ON HOW
SPEECH RECEIVED IN ARAB STATES OR OTHERWISE.

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2. PERHPAS, CLOSEST SYRIANS CAME TO REVEALING THEIR
PUBLIC POSITION SINCE SPEECH WAS MARCH 23 FRONT PAGE
COLUMN IN AL-BAATH BY SENIOR COLUMNIST AMID AL-KHULI.
ENTITLED "DANGEROUS PERIOD OF STAGNATION IN POLITICAL
MOVEMENT," COMMENTARY REITERATED SYRIAN POSITION THAT
QSP FREEZING THE SITUATION" IS INTOLERABLE AND THAT ARABS
CANNOT REMAIN QUIESCENT INDEFINITELY WHILE ISRAELIS

CONTINUE TO OCCUPY ARAB LAND AND PALESTINIANS "REMAIN WITHOUT THEIR HOMELAND. THIS IS WHAT SYRIA HAS INFORMED ALL STATES CONCERNED WITH PEACE." KHULI ASKED, "HAS THE ISSUE BECOME NECESSITY OF PALESTINIAN RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL? OR SHOULDN'T THE MATTER BE TOTALLY REVERSED?" KHULI EXPRESSED BELIEF THAT ISRAEL WOULD WITHDRAW ONLY WHEN FORCED TO DO SO AND OPINED THAT RETURNING TO UNSC WOULD BE FINAL DIPLOMATIC MANEUVER "TO EXPOSE ISRAELI CARDS AND PUT ISRAEL FACE TT FACE WITH INTERNATIONAL WILL." HE STATED THAT IF GENEVA DOES NOT CONVENE THEN UNSC WOULD BE PROPER FORUM TO DEAL WITH QUESTION ME SETTLEMENT. HE CONCLUDED THAT SUCH A DEBATE WOULD LEAD TO OPPORTUNITY TO CONDEMN ISRAEL AND TO TEST SINCERITY OF NEW U.S. ADMINISTRATION THROUGH ITS WILLINGNESS TO FOREGO USE OF VETO.

3. COMMENT: WITH ASAD PREPARING TO TRAVEL TO MOSCOW NEXT MONTH, LACK OF SYRIAN PUBLIC REACTION TO BREZHNEV'S PROPOSALS MAY REFLECT SYRIAN DESIRE TO KEEP ITS OPTIONS OPEN AT CURRENT STAGE AND AVOID REACTION WHICH MIGHT ANTAGONIZE EITHER US OR USSR. KHULI'S SUPPORT FOR UNSC DEBATE, HIS GRUMBLING ABOUT LACK OF SPECIFIC PROGRESS TO DATE AND HIS STATEMENT THAT CURRENT PERIOD IS ONE OF STAGNATION ARE VIEWS SHARED BY SYRIAN GOVERNMENT ON CURRENT STATE OF PLAY IN ME.
MURPHY

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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TAGS: PFOR, SY, UR, (BREZHNEV, LEONID I)
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